

Marine Recreational Information Program
Executive Steering Committee
Meeting Summary – May 24, 2007
Silver Spring, MD

Meeting Participants:

John Boreman – Director, NOAA Fisheries Office of Science & Technology; ESC Chair
Nancy Thompson - Director, NOAA Fisheries Northeast Science Center
Kitty Simonds – Executive Director, Western Pacific Fishery Management Council
Vince O’Shea – Executive Director, Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
Larry Simpson – Executive Director, Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission
Russell Porter – Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (for Randy Fisher)
Bob Fletcher – Chair, Recreational Fisheries Subcommittee, MAFAC
Doug Mecum – Administrator, NOAA Fisheries, Alaska Region
Jay Ginter – NOAA Fisheries, Alaska Region
Miguel Rolon – Executive Director, Caribbean Fishery Management Council
Gordon Colvin – Director, NYSDEC Bureau of Marine Resources
Tom Gleason – NOAA Fisheries, Office of Management & Budget; ESC Executive Secretariat
Rob Andrews – Interim Chair, Operations Team
Forbes Darby – Chair, Communications and Education Work Group

The Marine Recreational Information Program Executive Steering Committee (ESC), Chaired by Dr. John Boreman, Director of NOAA’s National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) Office of Science & Technology, met in Silver Spring, Maryland on May 24, 2007 via video and teleconference. The ESC addressed the following topics:

1. Presentation of Operation Team’s Work Plan for Improving Marine Recreational Fishing Data Collection Programs – Rob Andrews, Operations Team Interim Chair

Rob Andrews presented the Operation Team’s (OT) Work Plan for improving marine recreational fishing data collection programs. The OT has established the following work groups to address the prioritized list of tasks for improving marine recreational fishing data collection programs (posted at: <http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/RecSurveyUpgrade/RecSurveyUpgrade.html>):

- Data Analysis
- Survey Design
- Data Management and Standards
- For Hire
- Highly Migratory Species

For each Work Group, the Operations Team has identified prioritized recommendations and associated tasks to be completed. Each Work Group will be tasked with developing project plans to address the prioritized recommendations and will have the flexibility to form subgroups to address regional or specialized issues. The OT will organize a kickoff workshop in July or August to communicate the OT’s goals and objectives to the Work Groups and then allow them to begin work on developing their project plans and milestones.

By June 1, 2008, in accordance with the charge from the ESC, the OT will initiate the framework for developing and implementing recreational fishing survey improvements. Specifically, the OT will have documented data standards, QA/QC procedures and interviewing procedures; an evaluation of the appropriateness of NMFS' current estimation procedures; and project plans to examine potential sources of bias in recreational fishing surveys. The OT will also provide a framework for conducting license-based and dual frame effort surveys; and project plans to improve estimates of discarded catch in recreational fisheries, integrate for-hire logbook and sampling programs, and expand data collection for highly migratory species. Challenges facing the OT include obtaining adequate funding to conduct studies and undertake analyses, and meeting the tight June 1, 2008 deadline for initiating the framework to develop and implement recreational fishing survey improvements.

Following discussion of the OT's proposed Work Plan, the ESC approved the Plan, emphasizing the need to get the OT's Work Groups staffed prior to the Kickoff Workshop and get products out for review ASAP.

2. Establishment of Communications and Education Group – Forbes Darby, Chair

John Boreman introduced Forbes Darby from NOAA Fisheries Office of Constituent Services as the Chair of the Communications and Education Group (CEG). After thanking the ESC for inviting him to undertake this important role in the overall effort to improve marine recreational fisheries data, Forbes reviewed the role of the CEG and progress to date on filling out its membership. The ESC charged Forbes with fleshing out the CEG's membership and development of a communications plan for review at the Kickoff Workshop in July.

3. National Registry – Gordon Colvin

John Boreman introduced Gordon Colvin who has agreed to lead the effort to establish a regionally-based National Register of saltwater anglers as required by Section 401(g) of the reauthorized Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Following on the discussion regarding establishment of the Communications and Education Group, Gordon stressed the need for a clear and consistent message as efforts move forward on development of a National Registry. Gordon expects to begin work in mid-June following his retirement from the New York Dept. of Environmental Conservation, Bureau of Marine Resources. Gordon and the ESC identified the development of minimum required data elements for state angler registries as a high priority task for Gordon when he comes on board.

4. Meeting Policy

In the interest of openness and communication, John Boreman proposed, and the ESC concurred, that any member of any MRI Work Group, Team or Committee should be allowed to attend meetings of any other Work Group, Team or Committee as an observer. While such attendance is encouraged, invitational travel can not be paid.

5. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the ESC will take place in Silver Spring, MD on June 7, 2007 at 1:00 pm.